

INFLUENCERS

A Mini-RPG for 1 GM and Any Number of E-pals

You are an INFLUENCER, a powerful demigod of the CYBERNET, an infinite city that stretches to every horizon. Your follower-cult worships you, brand-states court your opinion, and millions of enraged, frothing ANONS seek to steal your power and CANCEL you.

Two competing forces rule the CYBERNET. In the deep catacomb-sewers of the city silently hums THE ALGORITHM, an omnipotent god-computer, whose unknown machinations control everything. Raging miles above the tallest skyscraper is THE DISCOURSE, an eternal storm that pours either soothing, life-giving rain or apocalyptic, world-ending fire, all at a moment's notice.

Will you use your immense power to SAVE THE CYBERNET? Or will you SELL OUT? The choice is YOURS.

Character Creation

As an INFLUENCER, what audience do you cater to, and what is your personal brand? Choose one from each of the following columns, or roll 2d6, or come up with answers of your own:

| Audience | | Personal Brand | |
|----------|----------------------------------|----------------|--|
| 1. | Makeup/Beauty Products | 1. | Excessive amounts of irony |
| 2. | Video Games/Tabletop Games | 2. | Really, really angry all the time |
| 3. | Music/Visual Art | 3. | You use a cartoon avatar and nobody has seen your real face. |
| 4. | Film/Television/Radio/Podcasting | 4. | Sickeningly cute |
| 5. | Sports/Fitness | 5. | Way too analytical/political about everything |
| 6. | Food/Cooking | 6. | Complete moron with categorically wrong opinions. |

Mark down your audience and your personal brand on a blank sheet of paper. That is now your character sheet. These two traits will allow you to increase your chances of success when taking risky actions (that will be explained later).

Next, choose a social media platform that your INFLUENCER primarily posts to. This needn't be the only social media site they use, but it is the one on which they got famous. If you need inspiration or the soothing caress of random chance, use the following table.

| Social Media | | You also don't need to use a real-world social media site. If you want, you may make up a new social media site that the CYBERNET uses. Make sure to give it a weird, dumb name, like Hellzone, PplSpot, or Reddit. |
|--------------|---|---|
| 1. | YouTube | |
| 2. | Personal blog or Tumblr | |
| 3. | Twitter | |
| 4. | TikTok (Vine if you're feeling nostalgic) | |
| 5. | Facebook meme groups | |
| 6. | Instagram | |

Next, as an INFLUENCER, the worship of your FOLLOWER-CULT grants you immense power. Decide upon a special power, weapon, and/or method of combat. Mechanically, it doesn't matter whether it is a gun, tai-chi, a flaming sword with the soul of your mother sealed inside, or lightning bolts that you shoot out of your own bare palms - in the CYBERNET, it's not the strength of the weapon, but how you use it.

You should pick some power/weapon/combat style that fits the theme of your audience and/or personal brand. So for example, if you put down "Cooking" as your audience, your weapon might be a frying pan. I dunno, use your imagination. Or if you don't want to, here's a table with some choices for inspiration:

| Weapons/Powers | |
|----------------|--|
| 1. | You can control static, making any cybernetic device around you emit a deafening static blare at any time. |
| 2. | Summoning and then breaking mirrors to give your opponent bad luck |
| 3. | Gun that shoots smaller guns |

| | |
|----|--|
| 4. | You can summon anything that you're able to draw on your tablet out of the tablet and into real life to fight for you. |
| 5. | The angrier you get, the bigger your fists are |
| 6. | Combat Yoga |

Next up is stats. Every player has 4 stats: **Followers**, **Humanity**, **Yelling**, and **Cyber**. Each player also has a pool of resources to help improve their chances at success on a move, called **\$**. To find your character's stats, first begins with these baselines:

Followers: 5

Humanity: 3

Yelling: 3

Cyber: 3

\$: 2

Each player then flips 5 coins. For each tails, they add 1 to their **\$**. For each heads, they add 1 to one of either **Followers**, **Humanity**, **Yelling**, or **Cyber**.

Next, select 2 brands that your character endorses and receives free stuff from. These are most effective when they're real world brands. Maybe your beauty guru gets makeup sent to her straight from Revlon, or your breadtuber is really into Nord VPN this month. These brands will give you bonuses during play depending on how you use them (more on that soon). At any time, your character may have on them products/merch associated with their chosen brands.

Finally, fill out the rest of the personal details of your character. Be as general or as specific as you like. Things to consider include a name, physical appearance, smartphone brand, hair/eye color, backstory, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, etc.

Yay! Now to learn how the game works! Sorry, I mean *ahem* Now for you to enter the CYBERNET and SAVE HISTORY!

Flippin' Coins & Making Moves

INFLUENCERS uses a coin-flipping system to resolve situations during the role-play where risky business is happening.

Each of your stats comes with a corresponding *move* which determines how the stat is used. When the circumstances of the first part of the move have been met in the narrative, then a player can trigger that move and flip some coins to find out what happens.

A flip succeeds when it has a certain number of heads, decided by the difficulty that the Game Master assigns to the task. Easy tasks require 1 heads to succeed at, moderately hard tasks require 3 heads to succeed at, and truly difficult tasks require 5 heads to succeed at.

If you have a beneficial bonus that gives you a heightened chance of success, then you have Advantage on your flip, lowering the threshold for success by 1. Likewise, if you have a negative situation that gives you a heightened chance of failure, you have Disadvantage on your flip, raising the threshold for success by 1. Advantage and Disadvantage cancel each other out. You can't have Advantage or Disadvantage more than one time each for a given roll.

When you flip and you succeed, your desired intentions go as planned, and you and the GM work together to describe what happens next. When you fail, the move describes a negative consequence, and you and the GM work together to describe what happens next and in what specific way you fail.

In addition to normal success and failure, there are two special results your flip can give you:

- If, during a flip, you flip all heads, you Go Viral. Gain 1 **Follower** for each coin you flipped.
- If, during a flip, you flip all tails, you Get Ratiod. Lose 1 **Follower** for each coin you flipped.

Followers

Your **Followers** represents how many millions of people follow you as an INFLUENCER. So if you start with a **Followers** of 6, that means that 6 million people follow you.

This number tracks your health - when you are reduced to 0 **Followers**, you cease to be relevant and are CANCELLED (discussed later). Your number of **Followers** will rise and fall during the game as the result of combat and the use of various other moves. You can also use your followers to accomplish certain tasks for you. To do this, you use the move *Like, Comment, Subscribe*.

Like, Comment, Subscribe: When you want your followers to do something, say what you want and how you communicate it to them through social media, then flip one coin for each point of **Followers** you have. If you succeed, they will attempt to do what you want. If you fail, lose 1 **Follower**.

Humanity

Your **Humanity** represents your ability to interact with people who aren't your followers. Whenever you attempt to make a genuine human connection with someone who isn't one of your followers, this is the stat you use. Persuasion, empathy, intimidation, and any other social skill all fall under this umbrella.

Any time that you need to roll your **Humanity**, use the move *Welcome to the Family*.

Welcome to the Family: When you attempt to make a human connection with someone who isn't one of your followers, flip a coin for each point of **Humanity** you have. On a success, they respond as you want them to, and you gain 1 **Follower**. On a failure, they turn hostile, and you lose 1 **Follower**.

Yelling

Your **Yelling** stat represents prowess with your weapon/power in combat. Whenever you are trying to hurt or incapacitate someone else, whether that's through magic, gunplay, or a slap to the face, flip for **Yelling**. To do so, use the move *Hot Take Alert*.

Hot Take Alert: When you use your weapon/power in attempt to harm or incapacitate someone else, flip one coin for each point of **Yelling** you have. On a success, the target of your attack loses **Followers** equal to how many heads you flipped. On a failure, you miss.

Before you flip, you may also choose a social media platform to announce a hot take that your character broadcasts to the CYBERNET and to their follower as they attack. If the hot take is sufficiently stupid (the table can vote on it if need be), add two extra coins to your flip.

The specific opinion(s) represented in your hot take may affect the narrative down the line. For example, if your hot take disses someone, expect that person to not be a fan of you when you meet them.

Cyber

Your **Cyber** stat represents your finesse with the CYBERNET. The CYBERNET is ruled by technology, through and through. A good understanding of navigating tech is necessary to accomplish many things. If you need to hack into someone's account, fix a weapon, look up information, or glimpse into the truth of THE ALGORITHM, this is your stat.

During the course of play, you will likely find times where you want to use your weapon/power, but for reasons other than attacking someone, such as transportation, or showing off. Since all weapons/powers are a manifestation of the CYBERNET, this is also the stat you use when using your weapon/power for noncombat purposes. Any time you want to flip for your **Cyber** stat, use *Hack Into the Main Frame*.

Hack Into the Main Frame: When you do something involving expertise with the Cybernet's technology, flip a coin for each point of **Cyber** you have. On a success, the technology does as you intend. On a failure, it malfunctions and does something different.

When you fail this flip, you may spend 1\$ to immediately redo the entire flip over again. You may do this as many times as you like.

\$

Your \$ represents cold, hard cash. In gameplay terms, it serves as a reserve pool of funds you can use during play to improve your chances at succeeding on a flip.

There are two moves associated with \$. *Put It On My Card* lets you spend your \$, and *Sell Out* lets you acquire more \$.

Put It On My Card: Before you flip any number of coins for any other move, you may spend any number of \$, reducing your total \$ by the amount spent. For each \$ spent, add 1 coin to the flip.

Sell Out: Tapping into those sweet advertising dollars lets you go above and beyond. Whenever you use or endorse products/merchandise associated with the brands you chose during character creation, add 2\$ to your reserve and lose 1 **Humanity**.

Additional Moves

In addition to the moves directly tied to stats, there are a few additional moves to be aware of.

Invoke Audience/Invoke Personal Brand

The audience and personal brand you wrote down on your character sheet during character creation can help you succeed at rolls where your expertise may be relevant. For example, if your INFLUENCER produces polka covers of pop songs (audience), you can get a bonus when they need to interact with anyone in the music world. Likewise, if your INFLUENCER is absolutely furious at all times (personal brand), they can get a bonus for trying to intimidate someone.

Invoke Audience/Invoke Brand: When either your audience or personal brand are relevant to the task at hand, you may add 1 coin to your flip. If both your audience and your personal brand are relevant to the task at hand, you may add 2 coins to your flip.

Collab

If two player characters decide to work together, then they can do a *Collab*.

Collab: When two or more player characters try to work together, they describe how they broadcast their interaction to their followers for maximum exposure.

One player out of the group makes the flip, with +1 coin for each other player Collabing with them. If they succeed, everyone involved each gains 1 **Follower** and succeeds at the task at hand. If they fail, everyone involved each loses 1 **Follower** and fails at the task at hand.

Regardless of the result, the broadcast of the collab to followers will result in the narrative consequences in the future.

Cancelled

If you lose all of your **Followers**, then you immediately trigger the move *Cancelled*.

Cancelled: If you lose all of your **Followers**, then you automatically trigger this move, and make note of the following:

- Cross out your **Followers** stat and your **Yelling** stat. For the rest of the session, you can't gain or lose **Followers**, and you can't flip for anything involving the **Followers** stat or the **Yelling** stat.
- Enemies in combat no longer target you.
- If you would take damage for any reason, you are incapacitated for the rest of the scene. At the beginning of the next scene, you are free to move and act again.
- You may still flip for the **Humanity** stat and the **Cyber** stat at any time, and you may still spend your \$ on any flip.
- You can no longer take the **Collab** action, but you are totally still allowed to make pithy comments to the other player characters about how you remember when you were an INFLUENCER and you're totally not jealous or anything.
- You gain access to two new moves, *I'm Working on Myself* and *On the Reg*.

I'm Working on Myself: When you spend time alone away from the other characters, flip 5 coins. For each heads, gain 1 **Humanity**.

You may only make this move once per session.

On the Reg: When you try to interfere with anyone through physical force, the next non-cancelled player character to attack them gains Advantage.

Resources For the GM

This section covers useful things for the GM to keep in mind. Some have been covered in other sections already, and others have not. If you are just playing, you don't need to read this part - any extra information in this section is something only the GM needs to know.

Running the Game

The game is a back and forth between you and the players, where you describe the scene and what is happening, and the players respond with what they do. You've played a TTRPG before, you know how it works.

As the GM, you have some priorities for handling the fiction of this game. Always keep these in mind when figuring out what happens and how to progress the story:

- Go With the Flow. Let the player characters help build the story by choosing where to go and what to do. Be open to improv and changing your plans.
- Create Character Moments. If you have an opportunity to let one of the player characters do something cool, let them. Let the players get the most out of their powers and their choices.
- Use the Internet as Inspiration. If you ever need inspiration for what to do in the story, use the Internet as your guide. Literalize any bit of Internet culture you can. Make the characters visit the buried ruins of the Myspace Ward, have them fight off literal trolls, introduce them to a Nigerian prince who needs financial help.
- Remember: CANCELLED Players Aren't Dead. Just because a character has been CANCELLED doesn't mean that they're out of the narrative. Players who have been CANCELLED even gain two entirely new moves to push them towards a new role. When someone gets CANCELLED in the narrative, give their character time and room to change course and learn something, but then reunite them with the team when you get the chance.
- Be Ridiculous. INFLUENCERS is a very silly game, and it is the most fun when people are laughing. Don't be afraid to get silly.

Additional Lore and Worldbuilding

If you want some extra context to the world of CYBERNET, this section provides additional information and inspiration for how to shape your session.

THE ALGORITHM AND THE DISCOURSE

THE ALGORITHM and THE DISCOURSE are best thought of as amoral forces of nature (akin to Greek Gods) who live on a higher plane and yet still manifest in the physical world.

Nobody knows where they came from or how they became so powerful. Likewise, nobody is sure if they can be destroyed, reasoned with, or otherwise altered. If there are answers to such questions, it is up to you to decide.

BRAND STATES

Brand-States are capitalist megacorporations inhabiting the CYBERNET that have accumulated enough power to become legally distinct nations, with their own bylaws, governments, and internal politics. Brand-States in the CYBERNET are represented by huge, interconnected networks of skyscrapers that move and shift with the shifting intentions of the Brand-State. They take up multiple city blocks, sometimes hundreds, and occasionally swallow and incorporate new parts of the city into their empires.

The player characters will likely find themselves either working with or against any number of Brand-States. Give each Brand-State its own uniquely sinister flavour, regardless of whether they are an ally or an enemy. For example, the Sovereign Twitter Nation of Wendy's traffics in the flesh of its followers and will threaten to consume any INFLUENCER who gets too powerful.

FOLLOWER-CULTS

The most powerful INFLUENCERS command such respect that their followers live in isolated cult communes nestled in domed-off bubbles, abandoned office buildings, or settlements in the underground catacomb-sewers.

Many follower-cults practice quasi-religious human sacrifice and adopt other religious imagery to their own purposes. It is not uncommon for an INFLUENCER'S follower-cult to create depictions of said INFLUENCER as Jesus, as the Buddha, etc.

ANONS

ANONS are the everyday people of the CYBERNET, regular users who live and work in the endless city. Any given ANON may have a number of their own followers, themselves also ANONS, ranging from just a handful to thousands. It is not until

they have a substantial number of followers, however, that an ANON gains the powers of an INFLUENCER.

Some INFLUENCERS see ANONS as a lower caste in society and look down upon them. Others view ANONS who don't follow them as targets for recruitment or even potential enemies. ANONS who don't follow any INFLUENCER at all are seen as a threat to society. Your player characters may choose to embrace or reject these norms and attitudes.

If a horde of frothing ANONS becomes sufficiently enraged, they may mass revolt.

NPCs and Enemies

NPCs and Enemies should both be fairly easy to design.

For an NPC, give them a goal and a personality, and you're ready to go. If they are a fellow INFLUENCER, you can quickly roll them an audience, personal brand, and weapon using the tables under Character Creation.

For an Enemy, give them at least a goal, and if they are sentient, also a personality.

Combat in this game should be resolved quickly, using only a couple of rolls. Here are some example stats to use for enemies. Feel free to tweak these numbers as you see fit:

| Difficulty | Enemy Followers | Enemy Damage |
|------------|------------------------|---|
| Weak | 3 | 1 damage (player character loses 1 Followers) |
| Moderate | 9 | 3 damage (player character loses 3 Followers) |
| Dangerous | 20 | 5 damage (player character loses 5 Followers) |

EXAMPLES NPCS

Saleena Kropotkin is a rogue INFLUENCER working to bring down murderous Brand-States from the inside. While she posts goth makeup tutorials to TikTok by day set to depressing sadcore, when met at night in-person she is a furious dreamer sure to get the player characters involved in some anti Brand-State trouble. Her power is the ability to summon spiders to do her bidding.

The Corpro-Catalysts are a line of intelligent AI-operated cybernetic robots that handle secretarial duties for major Brand-States. If a Brand-State wishes to contact an INFLUENCER, they often will send a Corpro-Catalyst carrying a message. Corpro-Catalysts serve their Brand-States faithfully but can be reprogrammed with a high enough **Cyber** check.

Sandstorm212 is the handle of a techy ANON who works on fixing a lot of backend tech issues with various CYBERNET buildings. He enjoys a hard day's work and is willing to help if it means a chance to flex his expertise. His fiery red hair and missing front tooth make him easy to remember.

EXAMPLE ENEMIES

Theosophicus is a born-again follower-cultist who started a splinter-cult of his original INFLUENCER's follower-cult, taking a significant chunk of followers of his own and quickly gaining power. Now, with the ability to control the minds of his own followers like they are his puppets, he seeks to gain even more power, becoming the strongest of all INFLUENCERS.

Followers: 20

Damage dealt: 5

Malware are small, rodent-sized viruses that linger in trash cans, gutters, and sewers all around the CYBERNET. Their long, spindly legs and upright, crystalline bodies call to mind medical viruses. A single one is easy to deal with, but when they gather up in a horde, they can be mighty dangerous.

Followers: 3

Damage dealt: 1

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA is a being made of living fire born from THE DISCOURSE in a firestorm rained down upon the CYBERNET. They wish to cause as much destruction as they can and gain strength from consuming especially bad takes. For miles around them the only sound that can be heard is the eternal, piercing scream of a being whose very existence is pain.

Followers: 9

Damage dealt: 3

Plot Generator

Roll a d6 for each of the following tables to create a ready-to-play plot!

| The antagonist(s) is/are . . . | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. | Literal Nazis """"Race Realists"""" |
| 2. | 500,000 Frothing ANONS |
| 3. | Somebody's grandmother who doesn't quite understand the CYBERNET |
| 4. | A celebrity with bad opinions (collectively choose one as a group) |
| 5. | A Brand-State (collectively choose one as a group) |
| 6. | Rogue fan-cultist(s) |

| Is/are trying to . . . | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. | CANCEL one or all of the Main Characters |
| 2. | Hack into THE ALGORITHM to control it |
| 3. | Popularize a shitty meme format that must be stopped |
| 4. | Control THE DISCOURSE for their own nefarious purposes |
| 5. | Start major drama between INFLUENCERS |
| 6. | Take over a part of the CYBERNET that belongs to someone else |

| Using . . . | |
|-------------|--|
| 1. | Witchcraft |
| 2. | Political string-pulling |
| 3. | An absurd amount of money |
| 4. | Live sacrifice of their own fan-cultists |
| 5. | Mind control |
| 6. | Robots and automated accounts |